

3 FAM 3230

COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCES

(CT:PER-678; 06-22-2012)
(Office of Origin: HR/ER/WLD)

3 FAM 3231 HOME SERVICE TRANSFER ALLOWANCE

3 FAM 3231.1 Certification for Granting Home Service Transfer Allowances

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)
(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

When granting a home service transfer allowance, the following certification must be inserted in the Remarks box of Form SF-1190, Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report:

"In order to be eligible for a grant of the home service transfer allowance, I certify that I agree to complete 12 months in the United States Government service following the effective date of my transfer to a post in the United States or other nonforeign area unless separated for reasons beyond my control which are acceptable to my employing agency. Failure to comply will result in my liability for repayment of this allowance."

Employee's Signature

3 FAM 3231.2 Approval Authority

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)
(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)
(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

- a. The following individuals or their designated representatives:
 - State: The Director, Office of Fiscal Operations (M/RM/FO/OFO)
 - USAID: See Automated Directive System (ADS) 477
 - USDA: Director, International Services Division OFSO
 - Commerce: Director, Office of Foreign Service Human Resources
- b. The representatives or their designee are authorized to:
 - (1) Grant home service transfer allowances and to revise or terminate grants

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of the allowance as specified by Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) 250 or to grant the allowances as specified by DSSR 013 as authorized by the Director of the Office of Allowance;

- (2) Determine whether a house or an apartment is occupied on a temporary basis as required by DSSR 251.2c;
- (3) Grant Home Service Transfer Allowance (HSTA) under Section 901 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 for employees assigned as rovers to Washington, DC, who meet the criteria of DSSR 250, except that they are not in the process of establishing themselves in permanent residence at the post of assignment. Once the allowance has been granted for any period of time, this eligibility for reimbursement of a subsistence expense portion of the HSTA terminates upon the employee's departure from the United States on official travel orders;
- (4) Certify to the intent as required by DSSR 251.1b (see also DSSR 077.32c).

3 FAM 3231.3 Home Service Transfer Allowance Advance

(TL:PER-500; 07-02-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID/USIA/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

For home service transfer allowance advance, see:

- State: Section 4 FAM 333.3
- USAID: ADS 621
- USDA: Section 4 FAM 333.3
- Commerce: Section 4 FAM 333.3

3 FAM 3231.4 Review of the Application

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID//Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Prior to granting a home service transfer allowance, the authorizing officer reviews carefully each submitted Form SF-1190, Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report, to ensure correctness of statements and costs for the temporary lodging portion and laundry/dry-cleaning expenses indicated therein and the inclusion of a certified food expense statement. For this purpose, employees are required to furnish supporting receipts or other appropriate documentation for daily cost of temporary lodging and laundry/dry-cleaning (unless coin-operated facilities are used).

3 FAM 3231.5 Grant of Allowance

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

The home service transfer allowance is granted on Form SF-1190, Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report. Copies of that form are distributed as provided in 3 FAH-1 H-3231.

3 FAM 3232 SEPARATE MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (SMA)

3 FAM 3232.1 Application

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Application for separate maintenance allowance is made on a Form SF-1190, Foreign Allowances Application Grant and Report. That application is processed under procedures found in DSSR 070 and chapter 3 FAH-1 H-3230. For USAID, see ADS 477.

3 FAM 3232.2 Separate Maintenance Allowance for the Convenience of the U.S. Government (Involuntary)

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

- a. The following officials are authorized to approve a separate maintenance allowance (SMA) for the convenience of the U.S. Government (involuntary) in accordance with DSSR 260:
 - State: Executive director of the appropriate bureau
 - USAID: See ADS 477
 - USDA: Director, International Services Division, OFSO
 - Commerce: Director, Office of Foreign Service Human Resources
- b. In specified circumstances, (with the exception of approvals for SMA for special need or hardship), authorizing officers in USAID, BBG, Agriculture, and Commerce may specify officers at field posts to grant, revise, or terminate separate maintenance allowances.

3 FAM 3232.3 Separate Maintenance Allowance (SMA) for Special Needs or Hardship (Voluntary)

3 FAM 3232.3-1 Approval Authority

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

- a. The following officials are authorized to approve a special needs or hardship (voluntary) separate maintenance allowance (SMA) under the criteria outlined in DSSR 260:
 - State: Executive director of the appropriate bureau
 - USAID: See ADS 477
 - USDA: Director, International Services Division, OFSO
 - Commerce: Director, Office of Foreign Service Human Resources
- b. This authority to approve a SMA for special needs or hardship may not be delegated.

3 FAM 3232.3-2 Authority to Deny

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

- a. Only the following officials can disapprove separate maintenance allowance (SMA) applications for special needs or hardship:
 - State: Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources
 - USAID: See ADS 477
 - USDA: Deputy Administrator, Office of Foreign Service Operations
 - Commerce: The Director General or appropriate secretarial officer.
- b. An employee will be informed in writing of approval or disapproval within 15 working days of receipt by the approving official.

3 FAM 3232.3-3 General

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

- a. A member of the Foreign Service (the employee) may request separate maintenance allowance (SMA) for special needs or hardship for any or all of his or her family members either before commencing a tour of duty or at any time

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during a tour of duty. The employee may also request termination of such SMA at any time during the tour of duty. Only one change of status of such SMA for each family member will be permitted for a single tour of duty, except following termination of an authorized/ordered departure (see DSSR 264.2(2)).

However, during the first or last 90 days of such tour, no change of status is allowed. (For the USAID definition of a tour of duty for SMA purposes, see ADS 477.) (See 3 FAH-1 H-3230 for further clarifying information and procedures on applying for and changing SMA).

(**NOTE:** Commerce normally will approve a change in SMA for special needs or hardship only where a change will not result in additional cost to the U.S. Government.)

- b. The following travel benefits will not be granted to those members of a family for whom the SMA described in this section is payable:
- Visitation travel
 - Home leave travel
 - Educational travel
 - Travel of children of separated parents
 - Rest and recuperation travel for family members
- c. Where the application is based on DSSR 262.2, it must include a signed statement from the employee certifying the circumstances of special need or hardship and stating that such circumstances do not:
- (1) Include a legal separation between employee and spouse or separation occurring through a divorce decree, whether limited, interlocutory, or final (a legal separation is deemed to exist at such time as either the employee or spouse must have initiated action affecting the status of the marriage such as a divorce/dissolution action, a separate maintenance action, or any type of formal or informal written agreement; or
 - (2) Include a dissolution of the employee's domestic partnership (a dissolution is deemed to occur at such time as either the employee or the domestic partner initiates action affecting the status of the domestic partnership, including the filing of a statement of dissolution under 3 FAM 1613, a legal action relevant to the continued existence of the domestic partnership, or any type of formal or informal written agreement indicating dissolution); or
 - (3) Involve a child whose legal custody is vested wholly, or in part, in a person other than the employee or the employee's current spouse or domestic partner, unless joint custody is established. (See DSSR 263.4) Employees should also be aware of other circumstances in which SMA is not warranted (see DSSR 263).

3 FAM 3232.4 Application in Washington for Salary, Allowances, and Post Differential Due Returning Personnel

(CT:PER-623; 11-16-2009)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

Foreign Service and other U.S. civilian personnel transferring to the headquarters of the agency, or separating, may be paid (by the agency's Washington, DC fiscal office) any salary and allowances due them from the last date paid by the previous payroll office. (See procedures in 3 FAH-1 H-3230.)

3 FAM 3232.5 Annual Report of Living Quarters Expenses

(TL:PER-500; 07-02-2004)

(Uniform State/USAID/BBG/Commerce/Foreign Service Corp-USDA)

(Applies to Foreign Service Employees Only)

An annual report of living quarters' expenses to the Department of State, Allowances Staff, is required by DSSR 077.2. Legible photocopies are acceptable.

3 FAM 3233 THROUGH 3239 UNASSIGNED